

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

King & Queen,

A T
W H I T E - H A L L,

The 12th of *November*, 1693.

Being the Day appointed for a

Publick Thanksgiving

To Almighty God, for the Gracious

Preservation of His Majesty,

And His Safe Return.

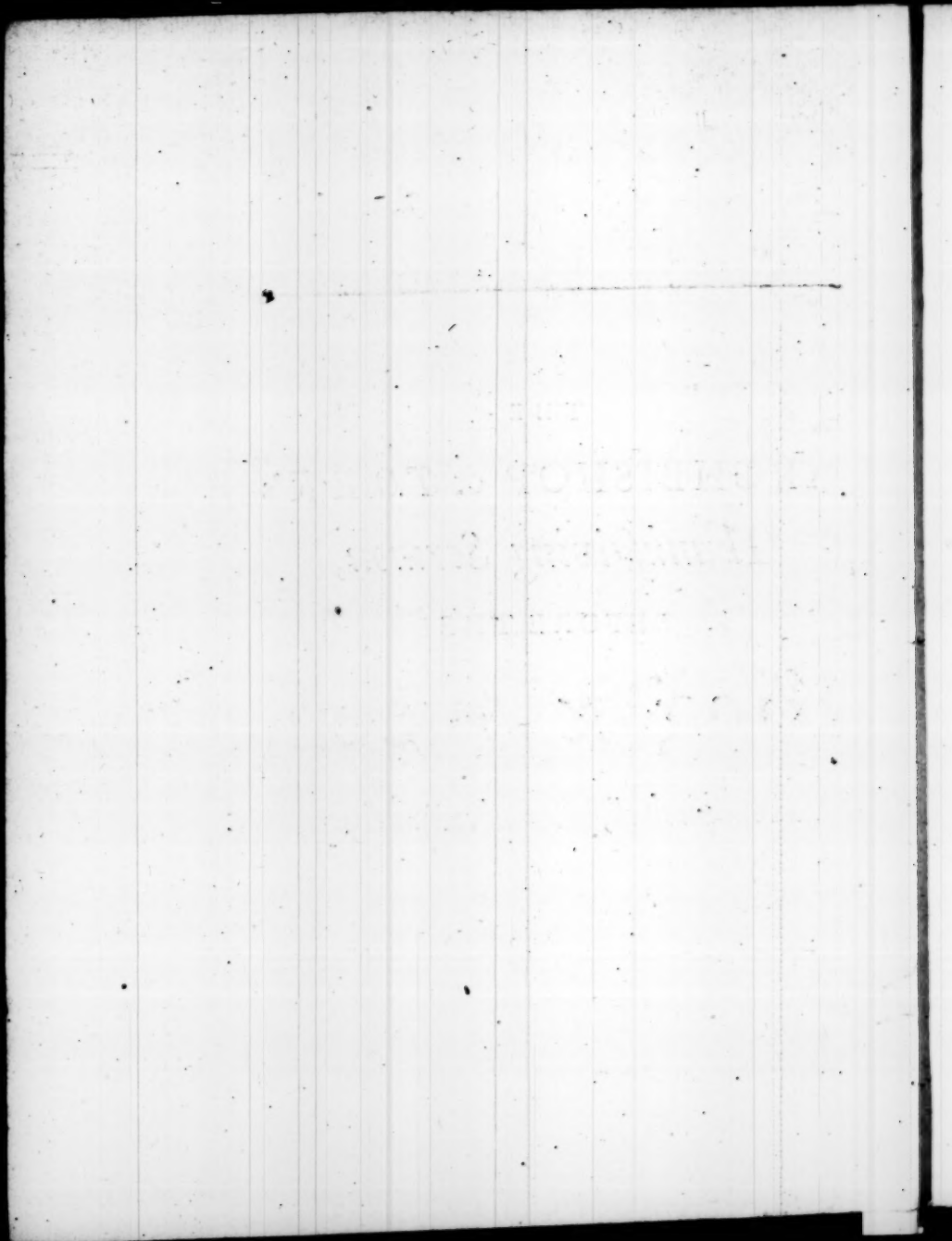
By JOHN, Lord Archbishop of YORK.

Publiss'd by Their Majesties Special Command.

L O N D O N,

Printed by T. W. for *Walter Kettilby*, at the Bishop's Head in
St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1693.

THE
ARCHBISHOP of YORK's
Thanksgiving-Sermon,
BEFORE THE
King & Queen,
At Whitehall, Novemb. xii. 1693.



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PSAL. xcvi. I.

The Lord is King, the earth may be glad thereof: yea, the multitude of the isles may be glad thereof.

THAT is to say, it ought to be Matter of exceeding Joy to all the Inhabitants of the World, that amidst all the Uncertainties, and Hazards, and Variety of Fortunes, which they here find themselves exposed to, there is One Above that governs All.

G O D

G O D that made the World is the *King* of it. All the Beings of the Universe, Angels, Men, and Devils, with all the other Animate or Inanimate things in Heaven and Earth, as they are His *Creatures*, so are they truly and properly His *Subjects*, and act entirely in subordination to Him, as Ministers and Instruments do under the Guidance of the Principal Agent.

G O D doth as truly Reign in the World, as any King does in his Kingdom : He doth as truly order the Affairs of it, as any Master doth those of his own Family. Nay, a Man's own Thoughts and Actions are not by a thousand times so much attended by himself, are not so much his Care, as the Affairs of the Universe are attended by, and are the Care of God Almighty.

This is the notion of the *Lord's* being *King* ; and, Do you not think it ought to be matter of *Rejoycing* to all Reasonable Creatures ?

O Lord, what a gloomy dismal *Scene* of things do they present us with, that give other Accounts of these matters ?

To banish God's Providence and Government out of the World, is to banish all Joy, all Peace, all Hope, all Comfort for ever, from all those that have the power of Thinking.

A Brute

A Brute indeed is not much concern'd how Matters are order'd : An *Ox* may grow fat in his *Stall*, and a *Colt* frisk in his *Pasture*, let the *Hypothesis* of the Government of the World be what it will. But to one that is made with a Faculty of Reasoning, that has *Hopes* and *Fears*, and can reflect on what is past, and hath a prospect of what is future ; what black and melancholy Apprehensions must it cause in such a one, to suppose that no care is taken of Human Affairs ; but that we sail in the tempestuous *Ocean* of this World, every minute in danger of *Rocks* and *Quicksands*, without any *Pilot* to steer us ?

Take what *Hypothesis* you will ; either that there is no God, but that all things come to pass by *Chance*, or inevitable *Necessity* ; Or, that there is a God, but that God having once put things into this Frame, never meant to trouble himself more about them, but left them to shift for themselves, *Natural Events* falling out from necessary Causes, and *Civil Affairs* being left to Mankind, who are to shuffle and divide the World among themselves as well as they can ! I say, proceed which way you will, if you exclude God Almighty's *Government*, you make this World so dark and miserable a place, that no serious-considering man can tolerably enjoy himself in it.

For

For here, upon the former supposition, you are left without Counsel or Advice. You have nothing to propose, nothing to design in the course of your Lives. It is all one how you behave yourselves, whether honestly or wickedly ; whether you mind your Business, or mind it not, for the Event will be the same. You are obliged to nobody for any Benefits ; you can complain of nobody for any ill usage. If you be in ill circumstances, you have none to apply to for Remedy ; and if you be in good ones, you may be stript of them without Remedy the next moment : for *all things* are carried on by a whirl of Fate.

And you are not much better'd by the latter *Hypothesis*, That God hath trusted the Government of the World with Mankind, who are endowed with Reason and Understanding.

For, if we consider how Mankind do sometimes use their Reasons, it is as good, if not better, to be expos'd to the Hazards of Chance or Necessity, as to be subject to their Wills.

The truth of it is, if this *Systeme* of the World be well consider'd, it will appear a more uncomfortable one than the other ; for it doth not remove from us the *Iron Band* of Fate, we are still under that Yoke as much as we were before. Yet besides these,

these, it puts upon us another Yoke, the *arbitrary Pleasures* of those of our own kind, which if they be not governed by Reason, are ten times more unsupportable than the other.

We are by this *Hypothesis* as much exposed to *Natural Evils* as we were before, and there is no help for them ; but over and above, we must bear the Indignities and Insolences, the Ravages and Cruelty of every one that is stronger than our selves, and hath the will to oppress us.

O hard Lot of Mankind, if this was their Constitution ! better by far were it for them to be Brutes, and think of nothing, than to be Men upon such Terms as these.

Happy therefore are the *Inhabitants* of the Earth, happy are the remotest *Isles* thereof, that there is a *King* that reigns both over *Fate* and *Men*. Happy are we, that there is a wise and intelligent *Being*, that superintends all our Affairs, and so governs both the Powers of *Nature*, and the Powers of *Mankind* ; that nothing can be done by either of them, but what is designed by, and pursuant to, his Counsels.

Upon this Supposition we may live like *Men*, and enjoy our selves with some Comfort in this World. We may propose Ends and Designs to our selves, and hope that with our *diligence* and good management they may take effect.

Upon this Supposition we may and ought to look upon all our good Successes, as the Blessings of God to us, and particularly that which we are this day met together to thank Him for; I mean, the wonderful *Preservation* of His *Majesty* from all the Dangers to which he hath so often been exposed, and his safe *Return* to us.

Upon this Supposition, we may hope, that tho' all things have not yet succeeded according to our Wishes, yet in due time they may, since the *King* of the *World* hath, by the frequent and unexpected Deliverances he hath wrought for us, and the strange unusual Providences that have attended our *King*, given us some Encouragement to believe (provided we do our parts towards it) that He hath reserv'd *Us* for better Times, and *Him* for the executing those *Glorious Designs*, which Good Men hope will at last be accomplish'd in the World.

Lastly, Upon this Supposition, every Honest Man will find reason enough both to bear contentedly whatever uneasy Circumstances he lyes under, and to trust in God's Mercy for the removal of them; and in the mean time to possess his own Soul in a cheerful dependance on God's Providence, and a hearty Thankfulness for all the innumerable Blessings he hath receiv'd, and doth daily receive from his Hands. And therefore, since *the*

Lord

Lord is King let the earth be glad : yea, let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof.

Now, That the Lord is really thus the King of the World, there are all the Arguments to persuade us that can be desir'd :

It is the Voice of *Reason* : It is the Voice of all *Mankind* : It is the Voice of G O D himself, both in His *Works*, and in His *Word*.

Give me leave to give you a *Specimen* in all these ways of *Arguing*, and but a *Specimen*, because it would be rather the Work of a *Book* than of a *Sermon* to dilate upon these matters.

First, I say, *Reason* tells us it must be thus. For admitting that the World did not make it self, but was made by God ; it will follow, that the same God that made it must still govern it : For, the same Ends, and Designs, and Motives (whatever they were) that induced God to make the World at first, will oblige Him for ever to take care of it and look after it. Unless we suppose God to contrive and act as uncertainly and unstedily, and with the same inconstancy and levity of Mind that some of *us Mortals* here upon Earth do.

Secondly, It is the Voice of all *Mankind*. For, otherwise how comes it to pass, that among all Nations, and in all Ages, there has been some *Religion* or other practis'd.

I pray, what is the meaning of worshipping God, of putting up Prayers and Supplications to Him for the things we need; of returning Thanks for the Benefits we have received; of appointing Religious Rites and Methods for the expiation of Guilt, or the averting of impendent Calamities (all which things have been practis'd in all Nations, from the beginning of the World to this day)? I say, what is the meaning of all this, unless it was hereby meant to be signified, That there is a God which doth concern himself in the Affairs of *Mankind*, and who doth dispense Good or Evil to them, as they well or ill behave themselves towards him?

The Truth is, To say that God doth not govern the World, is to say, that all Religion is a Cheat; and, that all Mankind, except a few debauch'd *Wits* in the more *polite Countries*, and a few *Brutes* in the very *barbarous* ones, (who are of no Religion at all) have been, and are a company of credulous Fools. For this is certain, whatever Argument either *Jew*, or *Turk*, or *Pagan*, or *Christian*, can suggest to himself for the convincing him, that it is his Concernment, or his Duty, to worship God, or to be of any Religion at all, nay, or to make any conscience of any Action he does; I say, all these Arguments do not only prove, but suppose, that God both knows and orders the Affairs of the World.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It may likewise be as strongly proved from *Effects*; from the tracks and footsteps of a Divine over-ruling Providence, which are to be seen, in the *Events* that happen in the World, which is that I call the *Voice of God in his Works*.

These are indeed so many and so visible, that whosoever hath either read History, or hath made Observations, must needs have taken notice of them.

If ever there were any extraordinary *Deliverances* vouchsafed to Kingdoms, or Cities, or particular Persons; or ever any remarkable *Judgments* inflicted upon any of these, which so carried the *Marks* and *Signatures* of God's Hand in them, that the one could not in reason but be *attributed* to the Care that he had, that *Religion* or *Innocence* should not be oppressed; and the other must in reason be interpreted as a Divine Vengeance, that pursued the *Guilty* for *their Crimes* :

If ever there were any *Prophecies* that did punctually foretell a *Particular Event* that came not to pass till many Years after, and such an Event as was perfectly contingent, and depended upon the *Wills of Men* :

If ever there were any *Notices* given of *Approaching Calamities*, by Voices from Heaven, by strange Appearances in the Air, and such other like
Pre

Prefages, not naturally to be accounted for :

If ever there were any *Apparitions*, any *Witchcraft*, any effects of a *Diabolical Power*, by which it may appear, that there are a sort of *Invisible Beings* in the World, which do bear ill will to Mankind, but yet are so curbed, that they cannot do all the *Mischief* they would :

If ever there were any *Miracles* wrought either by *Moses* and the *Prophets*, or by *Jesus Christ* and his *Apostles*, for the confirmation of the *Jewish* or the *Christian Religion* :

Lastly, If ever any Good Man did ever receive any *Blessing*, or avoid any *Misfortune*, which he might rationally look upon as an Answer to the *Fervent Prayers* that he had put up to God, or others had put up for him :

I say, if any of these things that I have now named be true (as all Histories give us a World of Instances of the truth of *all* of them, and as for *some* of them, I do not doubt but they fall within the compass of our own Observation and Experience.) I say, if any of these things be true, then have we a convincing Proof, that there is a Power that doth interpose in the Affairs of the World, superiour both to that of Nature, and to that of Mankind, and which moderates *all things*, according as it seems good unto him.

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But in truth, we need not go to *supernatural Events*, or to *particular Providences* for the Truth of this : For, in my Opinion, the daily effects that every one of us sees and feels ; the very Subistence of the World for so many Ages, in that regular frame that it was at first ; and the fair Treatment and Encouragement (how unequally soever things seem to be distributed) which virtuous and religious men have always found in it, and do yet find, notwithstanding that far the greatest number of men are of another stamp : I say, these very things seem an Argument beyond exception, That there is a God that presides over us, and takes care of us.

But, *Fourthly* and lastly, God has yet given us a further Proof of this, by his own many Authentick Declarations in the Holy Scriptures (which we call his *Word*.)

One of the main busineses of which is, to assure us, That *He rules in the kingdoms of men*, and disposeth of all their Affairs. Dan. 4. 17.

There He is set forth as the Author of all Events, both good and bad ; so that *no evil happens in a City, but the Lord doth it*. Amos 3. 6.

There He is represented as the *searcher of all hearts*, the Judge of all mens Designs and Actions, the Avenger of all Evil Practices, and the Refuge of all Good Men. Psal.

Pfal. 33. 16 There we are told, that *He is the God of battels,* and that *no King is saved by the multitude of his armies,* nor any mighty man delivered by his own strength : but *salvation is from the Lord.* And so are Disappointments also.

Pfal. 33. 14 There we are assured, that *He from his habitation* looketh down upon all that dwell on the earth. *He fashioneth the hearts of them ; he understandeth all their ways.* And though many are the devices that are in their hearts, yet it is his counsel only that shall stand.

Prov. 19. 21 In a word, it is God (as the Apostle tells us) that *worketh all things,* and he worketh them all according to the counsel of his own will. So that nothing comes by chance, nothing is done in vain ; but all Events are in pursuance of a Design.

Eph. 1. 11 Nay, not so much as the Event of casting a Lot (which seems the most fortuitous contingent thing in the whole World) is left at random : For even in that Case *the disposal of the Lot* (as Solomon tells us, *Prov. 16. 33.*) *is from the Lord.*

All this is not only the Doctrine, but in a great measure the very Language and Expression of those Holy Books. And, what can we desire more ? Or, what words can we invent that shall declare more fully the thing we are speaking of ?

None can that I know of, except perhaps those of our Saviour, with which I shall shut up this point. *Fear not,* (saith he to his Disciples) *Are not two sparrows* Matt. 10.29 *sold for a farthing? yet not one of them falls to the ground without the will of your Father.* Nay, I say unto you, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. O wonderful this! what! God Almighty number the very Hairs of our Heads! Lord, what is man, that thou shouldst have such respect unto him, and do that for him which even the nicest and most delicate of Men never yet did for themselves? But thus art thou pleased to express thy particular regard to the Sons of Men. Thus art thou pleased to let us see, that none of us are so inconsiderable, but that we are within the Verge of thy Providence, and Objects of thy Care. And therefore much more are *Cities*, and *States*, and *Kingdoms* so, wherein the Fortunes of so many Individuals are wrapt up.

O, blessed be God for his Love to Mankind. O, for ever adored be his Name for thus humbling himself to take notice of us and our Affairs, and likewise for giving us such abundant Assurance that He doth so. Since therefore we have such mighty Evidence of all sorts, that *the Lord is King*, let the earth be glad: yea, let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof.

And we shall still see greater reason thus to be glad, if we consider a little more particularly the *Rules* and *Measures* by which God administers the Affairs of his *Kingdom*: Which are not, as too often happens in *Human* Governments, Arbitrary *Will* or *Humour*, but perfect *Wisdom*, and *Justice*, and *Goodness*.

Tho' it be true what the Psalmist saith, That
 Psal. 135.6 *Whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that doth he in Heaven and in Earth, and in the Sea and all deep places*: Yet it is as true, that the Lord will never be pleased to do any thing, either in Heaven or in Earth, but what is suggested by Infinite *Goodness*, and in such ways as are the Result of Infinite *Wisdom*. For, as
 Psal. 33.5 the same Psalmist tells us, *He loveth righteousness and judgment; the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.*
 Psal. 145.17,9 *He is holy in all his ways, and righteous in all his doings: and his tender mercies are over all his works.*

To say, That God deals arbitrarily with any of his Creatures; or, that He dispenseth *Good* or *Evil* to them meerly because *He will*, without any other Reason, is in truth to disparage His Nature, and gives us such a notion of Him, as we have perhaps of some of the *Great Monarchs* of the World, but whom we are far from esteeming the *Best Men*.

No certainly, if we Mankind find in our selves, that the wiser and better we grow, the less are we led by *Humour* and *Will*, and the more do we shake off our Indifferency to *Good* and *Evil*, and the more steadily do we cleave to the eternal Laws of *Reason* and *Righteousness* in all our Actions: We may be sure that *God*, who is *Wisdom*, and *Justice*, and *Goodness* it self, can never in any of his Actions or Dealings with his Creatures, depart from these Principles.

The true Scheme of God Almighty's Government is plainly this.

His *Infinite Mind* clearly understood all the *Possibilities* of things long before they were in *actual being*. He knew what things were possible to be; and how they would act if they were put into being; and what the Events of all their Actions would be.

His *Infinite Goodness* moved him to put into *actual being* every thing that he saw was *Good to Be*; and to give them all those *powers of Action* that they have; and withal, to look after them so, as that both they and all their Motions and Actions should at last be to the Praise and Glory of the same *Goodness* that first enclined him to create them.

His *Infinite Wisdom* contrived the Methods in which all this should be brought to pass, and so laid the *Scheme* and *Platform* of things, that nothing

could happen in the whole Creation, from the beginning of the World to the end thereof, (tho' it was in it self never so bad, never so mischievous) but what both might and should be so ordered, as to be subservient to that end.

And lastly, The *Scheme* of Things being thus laid, His *Infinite Power* first produced *All things*, and still upholds *All things*, and from time to time, in their several seasons, actually brings to pass *every thing*, according to the Determinations of his eternal *Wisdom*. And tho' it doth it in ways secret to us, yet it doth it certainly and surely, and withal, most easily and gently, with the least violence to the establish'd *Laws of Nature*, and without any force at all upon the *Free Wills of Intelligent Beings*.

This, I say, is the Account that both *Reason* and *Scripture* give us of God's Making and Governing the World. *Infinite Knowledge* is the Foundation of *All*. *Infinite Goodness* is the Author and Mover of *All*. *Infinite Wisdom* is the Contriver and Director of *All*. And *Infinite Power* executes *All*.

Admit now these Principles, and see what will follow from them.

It will follow from hence, in the *first* place, that every Event that happens in the World, *is beautiful in its season*; as *Solomon* expresses it. That is to say, How unaccountable soever it may appear
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to us, yet there is a good Reason to be given, both why it happens at all, and likewise why it happens at that *time*, and with those *circumstances* that it doth. It helps to adorn the Great *Drama* and Contrivance of God's Providence, and ministers to excellent Ends, tho' we poor Creatures do little apprehend how it makes for them. As indeed it is impossible we should, unless we had the whole *Comprehension* of *Things* in our Minds, and saw the *entire Scheme* of God's Government, from the beginning to the end. This must needs be so, if we be Govern'd by *Infinite Wisdom*.

Secondly, It follows from hence, that both *Good* and *Evil* are measured to Mankind according to their respective Capacities. If we be fit for Good, Good will come. If we deserve Punishment, we must expect that likewise. For, *All God's ways are equal*, tho' *Ours be unequal*.

And therefore it is the most unreasonable thing in the World to impute our Successes, whether they be Good or Bad, so wholly to the *immediate Hands* that managed our Affairs, as not in the first place to take notice of the *Hand of God* in them.

There is a Divine Power that governs all these matters. And tho' it be true, that no Misfortune, no ill Success ever happens, but there is a *Human Reason* to be given for it; it may be found out
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upon what occasion, or by what neglect, or thro' what ill management that Misfortune happened: Yet it is as true, that if those that managed for us had the Wisdom, and the Conduct, and the Strength of the very Angels of God, yet their Endeavours would not be effectual, for the making us happy, unless we our selves were in a capacity of being so, by being proper Objects of God's Mercy and Favour. This must likewise be true, if perfect *Justice* govern the World.

Thirdly, It follows from hence, that even the severer Dispensations of God's Providence toward us; the things we complain of, and are uneasie under; our very *Calamities*, and *Misfortunes*, and *Disappointments*; even these are the effects of God's *Kindness*, tho' at the same time they may be likewise Instances of His *Justice*. That is to say, they are meant really for our *Good*, and will prove so, if we make that use of them we should do.

The very Nature of God is to do all *Good*, at all *Times*, to all his *Creatures*. For, He had no other End in making them, nor has he any other End in looking after them. But God cannot do good to All in the same way. *Correction*, and *Chastisement*, and *Punishment* is in some cases more expedient for the bringing People to Rights, and promoting their true Interests, than the giving them
all

all that their own Hearts can wish. In such cases therefore God must deal with his Creatures as every wise Parent deals with his Children. And tho' *these chastisements* (as the Apostle tells us) *are* ^{Heb. 12.11} *not joyous, but grievous*, yet are they designed for *the bringing forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness in all them that are exercised thereby.*

The truth is, we do not know what is good for our selves. We often wish for things, that perhaps, if our wishes were granted, would undo us. But our Happiness is, that God *knows* all, and so *tempers* all, that all Events, even those that we are apt to look upon as the greatest Judgments, shall at last appear most visibly to have been the wisest methods that could possibly have been contrived for the doing the *Greatest Good* to us. And if they do not succeed accordingly, it will be our own fault.

This must likewise needs be true, if perfect *Goodness* govern All: For even *Justice* it self is but a different way of expressing *Goodness*. And all that which we call *Judgment* and *Vengeance* is unaccountable, unless it serve for the *doing Good* to the World.

Fourthly, and *Lastly* ; From hence it follows, that all Events whatsoever, that ever did, or do, or shall happen in the World, either with respect to

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Nations, and Kingdoms, or with respect to particular Persons, are really the *Best* that could or can happen. And if things were ordered otherwise, it would not be so *well*.

A strange *Paradox* you will say this is ; that not only the *Mischiefs* and *Calamities* that fall upon Mankind, but even their *Faults* and *Mismanagements*, nay, their very *Sins* and *Wickednesses*, should be for the best. But really so it is, and so it must be, if both Infinite *Wisdom*, and *Goodness*, and *Power* govern the World.

Not but that a particular man's *Sins* may be the occasion of his *Ruin*, nay, and certainly *will* be so, if he persist in them.

And likewise the *Faults* of a *People* may and will have such an ill influence upon the *Community*, as if they be not amended, the *Desolation* of the Nation may at *last* ensue thereupon.

But still, tho' every thing that happens do not prove for the *Good* of that particular *Person*, or that particular *People*, that is immediately concerned in the Event ; yet it will certainly prove for the *General Universal Good*.

So that take all the whole *Series* of Events together, that have or shall come to pass all the World over, we may undoubtedly affirm, that All things have been as well managed, as it is possible they

they could be, and will be so to the end of the World. And this we our selves shall be satisfied of, when we come to be in a condition of making a just estimate of things.

For indeed, to suppose otherwise, is to say, either that *Infinite Wisdom* doth not act so *wisely* as it might do ; or, that *Perfect Goodness* might do more *Good* than it does do ; or, lastly, that *Omnipotent Power* cannot do every thing that is *possible*. All which Suppositions are plainly absurd and contradictory.

And now, if all these things be true (as they certainly are) how *natural* is the conclusion of my Text ? Since *God* is the *King* of all the World, and such a *King* likewise, that the *Measures* of his Government are exact *Goodness*, and *Wisdom*, and *Righteousness* ; what have all Mankind to do, especially *Good Men*, but to *Rejoyce and be glad* ?

This is the *Psalmist's* Inference from this Doctrin. And this is the present Business of the Day : And therefore let us all practise accordingly. That is the only *Application* I desire to make of what hath been said.

And *Two* ways we ought to express our *Rejoycing*.

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First,

First, In a hearty sense of all God's *past* and *present Mercies* to us, and an actual giving Him our Thanks for the same.

Secondly, In a cheerful dependance upon Him for his *Future Blessings*. Give me leave to speak a little to these two Points, and I have done.

First, Let us be heartily sensible of All God's *Kindness* to us, both *past* and *present*, and unfeignedly thank Him for the same.

It is very remarkable, that not only *David*, but the *Prophets* likewise, when they are treating of God's *Kingdom*, call upon the *Isles* in a particular manner to take notice of it; [See *Isa.* xxiv. 15. xlii. 4, 10, &c.] as here in my Text, *Let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof*: As if the *Isles* in a more peculiar manner were to have a share in the Blessings of his Government. And, no doubt, it was so intended; and accordingly hath so come to pass. For, it is the *Isles of the Gentiles*, by which Name the Scripture expresseth those Countries that were at the greatest distance from the *Continent of Judea*; I say, it is these *Isles*, which now at this day (God's ancient People the *Jews* being
for

for their *Infidelity* long ago rejected) are the principal Seat of his *Church* and *Kingdom*, and to which He vouchsafeth the Light of his Gospel, and the Means of Salvation ; so true is God to all his Promises.

But now, of all the *Isles of the Gentiles*, if any one above the rest hath felt the benign and gracious Influences of the *LORD's* being our *King*, certainly *Ours* is that *Island*.

How wonderfully bountiful hath God been to us in a continued succession of *Publick Blessings*, even from the first beginning of Time, that we have had any Memorials of Events among us ?

We had the Happiness to be early made a *Province* of the *Roman Empire*, and by that means were trained up to *Civility*, and *Arts*, and *Good Manners*.

That made way for the greatest Blessing that Heaven could bestow upon us, even the receiving *Christianity* : And that Blessing we had with the most early, being the first among the Nations that embraced it.

When through the just Judgment of God, *Barbarism* and *Ignorance* overspread the face of *Europe*, and by the occasion thereof *Superstition* and *Idolatry* made its way, and all the *Western Kingdoms* gave up their Power to a Foreign Usurper ; even

then this *Island* made the longest stand ; nay, and was never so perfectly subdued, but that *Popery* was here a different thing, from what it was in the *Southern* Climates.

When the happy time came, that God thought fit to set on foot the *Reformation*, (having first made way for it, by the restoring of *Learning*) such was His particular Care of us, that this was one of the *first* Kingdoms that was brought over to it.

And we have this Advantage above all other *Reformed Churches*, that as our *Reformation* was regularly made, and by just Authority, so it was made most agreeably to the Pattern of the Primitive Churches of Christ.

And, God be thanked, according to the goodness of it, such hath been its Success ever since ; for we have all-along, from that time to this, (except the interruption of a few Years in the late Times) served God in Peace and Happiness, under the same Establishment. And we trust we shall do so to the end of the World.

Many indeed have been the Oppositions and Disturbances, that have been given us by our Adversaries, both at home and abroad ; but as manifold likewise have been our Deliverances, and that in a most wonderful manner.

I need

I need not mention them, for they are known to us all.

How many *Secret* Conspiracies against our *Protestant Kings* and *Queens*, hath *God Almighty's* Mercy detected and defeated?

How many *Open* Attempts against our *Laws* and against our *Religion* hath He by strange Providences brought to nought?

More than once hath He by wonderful methods preserved us, when we gave up our *Church* and our *Liberties* in a manner as lost, and that in so easie and quiet a way, that there was no concussion of the Nation followed thereupon.

Are not these *Extraordinary Instances* of God's Kindness to a People? And, ought not we, who have receiv'd, and do yet enjoy the *Benefit* and the *Comfort* of them, to remember them with Thankfulness all the Days of our Life?

But some of us, perhaps, are not now in a *Humour* to think of these things; our present Circumstances fill our Minds, and *Those* are difficult enough. Let our *past* Deliverances have been what they will, yet we are sure we are now in a Hazardous Condition, notwithstanding all the Prayers we have put up for better Successes.

That

That is too true : And I pray God make us all sensible of it ; and especially make us sensible of the things that have caused it, namely, our Ingratitude for God's former Mercies ; our Lewdness and Debauchery ; the Spirit of Atheism and Prophaneness, and Irreligion, that still reigns among us as much as ever ; and above all, our unaccountable dividing our selves into Parties, and pursuing particular *Piques* and *Quarrels*, not only to the *neglect*, but to the plain *ruine* of our common Interests.

These are the things that have hinder'd our Successes, and provoked God's Displeasure against us ; and till these things be amended, I am afraid, we shall never be a happy Nation.

But yet, notwithstanding our high Provocations, yet so gently hath God corrected us, and even in his *Judgments* so much hath He remembered *Mercy*, that we have all reason to rejoyce at the Bignity and Kindness of His Dispensations towards us ; nay, and to render Him our most hearty and solemn Thanks, for the Mercies that He hath bestowed upon us, even with respect to the Matters we complain of.

For God hath really so far heard our Prayers this Year, that He hath given us the most important Successes, tho' not the Successes we desir'd.

He

He hath kept the *War* at a distance from us; and we have, under the Happy Government of *Her Majesty*, lived free from all Disturbance at home; every man *sitting under his own Vine, and his own Fig-tree*, (as the Prophet speaks) enjoying his Religion and Rights in perfect Peace; and with a bountiful Provision likewise, from God's Hand, of all the Things that were either needful or convenient.

And as for our Successes abroad, tho' it is not proper for me to talk of those matters, yet I believe thus much I may decently and truly say, That tho' the King had not the *Victory*, being overpowered by *Numbers*; yet he gained more *Honour*, and sustained less *Loss* than those that boasted of the *Victory*.

And which is yet more, God hath not only *Preserved his Person*, amidst the infinite Hazards he was continually exposed to, and *Returned* him safe to us, but returned him likewise with such Reputation for his *Courage*, and *Vigilance*, and *Conduct* in the Difficulties he had to struggle with, as hath gained him the *highest Esteem* among his *Enemies*, and therefore ought much more to *endear* him to his own *Subjects*.

And

And now, let all this be considered, and then let any man say, that really loves the Interest of his Country, whether we have not reason to look upon these things as *Great Blessings*; and as such, to return our Solemn Thanks to God for them.

And then, in the *Second* place, as to our *Future Successes*, let us all cheerfully depend upon God's Providence, and trust in his Mercy for them.

This is all the *Rejoycing* that we can express as to Future things; and this is that which the Apostle calls *Rejoycing in Hope*.

And surely great Reason have we thus to do, when we consider who it is that orders our Affairs; One, whose *Kindness* we have no reason to doubt of, having had so many Experiences of it, even beyond our Hopes and Expectations: And One likewise upon whose *Power* we may securely depend, since *His Arm is not shortened*, nor ever can be, how much soever our *Arm of Flesh* may.

God Almighty is our King, and He both certainly *knows*, and will certainly *do*, that which is *best* for us, provided we take care to do that which becomes *us*.

Away therefore with all *Fear*, and *Distrust*, and *Despondency*; it is an Argument of *Infidelity* and *Irreligion*, as well as *Cowardise*, to despair of the *Commonwealth*.

We

We are in as good Hands as it is possible for us to be : Nay, we our selves cannot wish to be in any other.

Let but us do our Parts, by qualifying our selves for God's Mercies ; and that is to be done by contributing our best Endeavours, every man in his Place and Station, to the Service of the Publick ; and then we may safely *cast all our care upon him who careth for us*, and we may be sure we shall not be disappointed.

This Method, as it is much more easie, so we shall find it much more conducing towards the obtaining the Successes we desire, than *Complaining*, and *Fretfulness*, and a tormenting *Anxiety* about our Affairs.

We may indeed, by our *Peevish* and *Querulous Humour*, disquiet our selves, and put others into a *Ferment*, nay, and at last, perhaps, may contribute a great deal to the *Glory* of hindering and defeating the most wise Counsels that are proposed for our *Safety* ; but that is the greatest Point we gain.

God Almighty will not alter his Methods for any of our foolish *Passions* ; but there is a way to prevail upon God himself, to do for us all that our own Hearts can desire, provided that which we desire be good for us ; and that way is, to own Him and his Government ; to *love* him, and to

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serve

serve him ; to be thankful for his Mercies ; to be easie and cheerful under all his Dispensations to us ; and lastly, to referr our selves entirely to his Wise Counsels, and to *trust* in his *Mercy* for all that is to come.

Great indeed, and wonderful, are the Promises that are made to those that put their *Trust* in *God*.

Jer. 17. 5. *Cursed* (saith the Prophet) *be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm : But, Blessed is he that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.*

Psal. 32. 10. *Many sorrows* (saith the Psalmist) *shall be to the wicked : but whose trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall embrace him on every side.* And again, *O taste and see, how gracious the Lord is : blessed is the man that trusteth in him.*

If now we believe these things, (and if we be Christians, we do and must believe them) consider I beseech you, the *Use* we are to make of them.

What have we All to do? Let our late *Disappointments* have put us into never so bad a Humour ; let our present *Circumstances* be entangled with never so many *Difficulties* ; yet what have we All to do, but to *Rejoyce* in *G O D*, and to *Trust* in his *Mercy*?

All is well, and All will be well for ever to them that Love *God*, and put their *Trust* in *Him*.

Sing

Sing we therefore unto the Lord a new song : let the congregation of saints praise him. Let Israel rejoyce in him that made him : and let the children of Sion be joyfull in their King. God is the King of all the earth, let us sing praises with understanding. The Lord hath pleasure in his people : he will for ever help the meek hearted : for his delight is in them that fear him, and that put their trust in his mercy. He is our help and strength, a very present help in Trouble : therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea : Though the waters thereof rage and swell, and the mountains shake at the tempest of the same. Even, in that case, the rivers of the flood thereof shall make glad the city of God. All the Blusterings and Storms that threaten God's People, shall turn to their Advantage, and shall really at length prove matter of rejoycing to them, how terrible and dreadful soever they appeared at first : For, as it there follows, God is in the midst of her, therefore shall she not be removed : God will help her, and that right early. God will be with his Church, and will deliver his People whenever it is proper and seasonable so to do.

Nay,

"Nay, let the *Worst* come ; tho' we were reduced even to the utmost Extremities ; which yet, God be thanked, we neither are, nor, I hope, ever shall be ; yet even, in that Case, the Consideration that *God is our King*, ought not only to support us, but to fill us with Joy. Even in that Case every Good Man should bear his part in the Song of the Prophet *Habakkuk*, (3. 17.) with which I conclude.

Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vine : Although the labour of the olive shall fail ; and the fields shall yield no meat : Although the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls ; yet will I rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

FINIS